

# Parents

Continued from page 1

parents to enroll their children in other Catholic schools. However, he explained that the high cost of the quadrant's uniform tuition rate drove many parents away.

Father Miller remarked that OLPH couldn't push re-enrollment with parents because many of them didn't belong to the parish. Along with losing the school, the parish lost the revenue school parents generated through fundraisers — another issue of contention with the quadrant governing board.

The board assessed a financial contribution to the quadrant budget from each northeast parish which had operated a school following its closing. The assesment mandated that the parishes contribute a fee equal to one-half of the closed school's budget in its last year.

For OLPH, that figure turned out to be \$60,000, a price too high for the parish to pay, observed Jim Duignan, a former president of the parish council.

"We felt that was too much money," he said. "The quadrant forgets that once the school closed, all the fundraisers (ended)." In particular, he said that the school's annual candy sale raised \$11,000-\$15,000 in revenue that's no longer available. Despite having their assesment decreased to \$35,000, the parish claims it was still assesed too much, and has only been pay-

ing the quadrant \$1,000 per month, Father Miller said.

Father John Mulligan, vicar general of the diocese, said that the matter was not settled with OLPH, and that "we're still working with them on it."

Members of OLPH may not be happy, but Rochester's Annunciation Parish gained a financial windfall after closing its school, noted Father Robert O'Neill, pastor.

Last December, in the *Parish Leadership Bulletin*, a periodic diocesan newsletter, Father O'Neill wrote of the parish when the school was open:

"Financially, life had become very difficult for us. We had not balanced our budget in a long time and many upkeep needs were beginning to be neglected. The 1989-90 budget would have been a disaster."

Father O'Neill told the *Catholic Courier* that the church had spent the money it would have used for the school on repairs to the roof and parking lot, and also for cleaning expenses as well as new carpeting for the church.

Overall, the quadrant reorganization saved parishes a huge chunk of change — slightly less than \$1 million — according to Brother Brian Walsh, diocesan superintendent of schools.

"No parish in the northeast by June of 1990 would have spent more for Catholic education than in June of '88," he said. In contrast, the overall expense of operating the quadrant's schools has increased 25 percent since 1988.

Brother Walsh attributed the huge savings to the fact that several buildings were closed, and greater numbers of students were being taught by fewer numbers of teachers. He also pointed out that all but one of the northeast quadrant teachers who wanted to teach in a Catholic school — and who was displaced by the closings — found employment in the diocese.

The superintendent emphasized, though, that the quadrant was merely holding steady, and that in all likelihood, the cost of Catholic education would continue to in-



Babette G. Augustin/Staff photographer  
Matthew Dana, a kindergartner at St. James School, Irondequoit, packs his books in preparation for summer vacation.

principals have advocated that diocesan subsidies be more equitably distributed, especially to middle-class parents who are now just above the income level needed to qualify for a subsidy.

Yet, some middle-class parents have only themselves to blame for tuition problems, argued Sister Dorothy Meisenzahl, SSJ, principal of St. Ambrose School.

"I've had the experience where someone would drive up in an absolutely gorgeous Cadillac and come in month after month and tell me he doesn't have tuition," she said, commenting that school parents must ask themselves: "Do they want to put money in Catholic education, or do they want to put it in a Florida vacation?"

One place parents seem willing to put their money is Northeastern Catholic Junior High, which has accepted 348 students with a waiting list of a dozen students. The school will eventually house 500 students, Brother Walsh said.

Edie Spicer, whose daughter attends St. Ambrose, was pleased at the prospect of her child heading to Northeastern this fall. "She's excited — it's a whole new school," Spicer said. "I think the children are going to get the best education possible."

Many principals in the quadrant echo Spicer's words, pointing to the centralized junior high as one of the best results of the northeast consolidation.

"We have sports here, but not to the extent that they'll have at the junior high," said Josephine Fama, principal of St. Thomas the Apostle.

Fama had grown accustomed to losing students to the public school system once they reached seventh grade, as parents sought to expose their children to academic and athletic programs unavailable at smaller Catholic schools.

"(Northeastern) is great," she continued. "I think it came at the right time."

Despite the great pain and anxiety reorganization caused, school officials agreed it came at the right time for Catholic education in the northeast quadrant. Declining enrollments and financially-strapped schools were facts the diocese had to face, they said.

"What the quadrant has done is it has caused people to listen more (and) to speak up more," Bahr said, adding, "I think that's good."

crease. "The plan calls for constant review and revision of financing," he said.

For the average northeast school parent, such logic translates into another tuition hike this year. Tuition for members of a quadrant school's home parish will start at \$1,150 for one child, up from \$1,095 last year, and for non-parishioners and non-Catholics, the rate will increase to \$1,295 for one child up from \$1,195 last year.

The tuition rate includes all school fees, a factor many parents were unaware of when the uniform rate was installed last year. The tuition increase at some schools thus appeared deceptively high — as much as 40 percent — because those schools had incorporated into a single fee the cost of items parents formerly paid for separately, such as lunch fees.

Increased tuition rates concern some principals who see middle-class parents being squeezed out of Catholic schools, while the rich pay their own way and the poor are subsidized by the diocese.

Marilyn Dewey, principal of St. Cecilia's School in Irondequoit, noted that many middle-class parents contribute to parish life by volunteering their services, but when tuition is due, their efforts aren't recognized. Dewey said that she and other

**Catholic Courier (USPS 135-580)**  
Vol. 102 No. 24 June 21, 1990  
Published weekly except week after July 4 and Christmas.  
Subscription rates: single copy, 50¢; one-year subscription in U.S., \$15; Canada and foreign \$15 plus postage.  
Offices: 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624, 716/328-4340.  
Second-class postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.  
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Catholic Courier, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.

★ TRAINS ★ WEEKEND SPECIALS ★ COMMERCIALS ★ GROUPS ★

**WONDERLAND**  
Stay at the lovely **Valhalla Inn**  
(20 min. from Wonderland)  
Family room, 1 nite stay with 2 free passes and 2 breakfasts. Children 7 and under are free.  
\$125<sup>50</sup> Canadian per room.

**EUROPE**  
London Sightseeing  
6 Nites  
From \$900<sup>00</sup> p.p./dbl.  
Call For Details

**SENIORS - 62 AND OVER**  
4 One Way Tickets or 2 Round Trip Tickets from \$384<sup>00</sup> p.p.  
Air From Rochester to Hawaii - \$420<sup>00</sup> p.p.

Videos Available in our office or for group presentations  
**889-9090**  
3220 Chili Ave.  
MON-FRI 9-5; SAT 10-5 By Appointment

**Jean Brown Travel Inc.**

★ HOTELS ★ ESCORTED TOURS ★ AIR ONLY ★ CAR RENTALS ★ CRUISES ★ ALL INCLUSIVE ★

★ RESORTS ★ HONEYMOONS ★ SENIOR CITIZEN FARES ★

**MEDJUGORJE \$699\***  
New York Departures Weekly beg. 8/21  
Summer & Fall 1990

- \* Round-trip airfare & transfers
- \* 5 nights private accomodations in Medjugorje
- \* 1 night Dubrovnik accom. in private villa.
- \* 2 meals daily also included.

St. James Medjugorje Tours is Catholic owned and operated by natives of the region.

Medjugorje Tours  
3175 North Lincoln Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60657  
(312) 472-4620 or Fax 472-8657  
1-800-331-6221

\* Plus tax & handling fee \$25.00. Sightseeing excursions not included. Land only available \$179. based on 20 passengers.

**Our Health-Care Issue Will Be Just What The Doctor Ordered**

Reach over 70,000 health-conscious readers by placing your advertising message in the Catholic Courier's health-care issue. Our health-oriented July 26 edition will be an ideal way to reach an affluent, family-oriented reader group. Readership demographics prove that subscribers read Courier ads and place a high degree of trust in them. As a result, readers say they consciously choose to patronize businesses that advertise in the Catholic Courier. Plus, the Courier's non-profit status enables it to offer lower cost-per-thousand rates than other area papers. All of which ads up to a very healthy return on your advertising dollar.

To place an ad or get more information, call:  
**716/328-4340**

Advertising Deadline: July 13  
Publication Date: July 26  
Advertising Rate: \$19.60 per column inch

**CATHOLIC COURIER**